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SUBJECT: A/S FRIED'S JULY 29 MEETING WITH UN  
UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL LYNN PASCOE ON CYPRUS, GEORGIA,  
KOSOVO, AND MACEDONIA

Classified By: Ambassador Alejandro D. Wolff for reasons 1.4 b and d.

¶1. (C) Summary: EUR Assistant Secretary Fried told Under-Secretary General Pascoe July 29 that the Russians have slowed negotiations to stabilize the Abkhazia situation on basis of the German-drafted Friends of Georgia paper and there is a real possibility of an outbreak of hostilities. Pascoe said the Secretary-General would soon name a Belgian (Verbeke) to be his new Special Representative in Georgia. Fried and Pascoe agreed that the UN-EU transition in Kosovo should be rapid. Pascoe noted that the UN's new envoy in Cyprus was selected for his political skill and noted that the UN would be happy to work with a U.S. envoy should one be named. Fried reviewed the Macedonia name change issue and noted that the two parties are not very far apart, hostile rhetoric notwithstanding. If the political will could be found, a solution was possible soon. End summary.

Georgia

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¶2. (C) EUR Assistant Secretary Fried provided UN Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe with a briefing on current efforts to accelerate negotiations to stabilize and ultimately resolve the situation in Abkhazia. The Western "Friends" (U.S., UK, France, Germany) had agreed on July 22 to convene a Political Directors' level meeting in Berlin on July 31-August 1 to find a way ahead based on the German-drafted "Friends of Georgia" paper, including its proposed Phase One "non-use of force" pledge and other security measures (which could be based on some of the ideas Secretary Rice and Georgian President Saakashvili discussed during her visit to Tbilisi). But Russian and Abkhaz reluctance has stalled the process. The meeting has been postponed until the end of August. A/S Fried noted his concern about a possible outbreak of hostilities in the region, given the two parties' propensity to provoke each other and Russia's habit of military attacks on Georgian assets. He noted that the Secretary may decide to take up the issue at the Ministerial level during UNGA. Pascoe asked why the UN had not been invited to Berlin; Fried replied that the USG would be happy to have the UN attend and we had told the Georgians and Germans so. Fried recommended that the UN speak with the Germans.

¶3. (C) Pascoe said the Secretary General will likely name former Belgian Permanent Representative Johan Verbeke to be the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) in Georgia to replace SRSG Jean Arnaud. (Note: Verbeke had been assigned to be SRSG in Lebanon but was recalled after threats were issued against him personally by a local al-Qaida-affiliated group stemming from his chairmanship of the UNSC 1267 Sanctions Committee. End note) Pascoe noted that Verbeke's main defect is he does not speak Russian. However he will have a higher profile and will not hesitate to call each of the sides on their missteps.

Kosovo

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¶4. (C) A/S Fried raised the still-stalled UNMIK-EULEC reconfiguration in Kosovo and expressed frustration with lack of an agreement to date, although he did note that the decision to start the clock ticking was a good sign. Pascoe blamed the EU for the difficulties in concluding the talks (e.g., the EU is claiming it cannot take over without adequate office space even though the UN has already vacated its offices for the EU mission). Fried emphasized that the EU and UN negotiators need to be instructed to close, and that the UNMIK and EULEX teams on the ground need to make "local deals and get going" on the actual reconfiguration and process of projecting EULEC into the north. Pascoe emphasized that the Secretary-General has ordered a fast hand-over and that he has not heard even the slightest indication that any UN staff are trying to do otherwise.

Cyprus

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¶5. (C) U-S/G Pascoe noted that UN Special Adviser in Cyprus Alexander Downer was specifically selected for his political background to help the two parties face the difficult political choices ahead of them and not to construct the terms of an agreement which are already broadly known. Pascoe told Fried that a U.S. envoy on Cyprus could be helpful if s/he were to keep in touch with Ankara and Brussels, bring in senior State Department officials when needed, and also speak with the Greek-American community and keep them from blocking progress. Pascoe stated that the UN would be happy to work with such an envoy.

Macedonia Name Issue

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¶6. (C) A/S Fried raised the Macedonia name issue and noted that the two parties are not far apart, despite the up tick in political posturing on both sides. The problem was political will on both sides. Pascoe agreed with the assessment. Fried noted that the Macedonians could test the Greeks by accepting a name change. In any event, Fried said, the U.S. supported UN envoy on the name issue Matt Nimetz, with whom he was in contact.

Khalilzad